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FCC Mail Room

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December 16, 2013

Julie Veach, Chief  
Wireline Competition Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th St., SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: FCC rate cap on prison  
telephone calls

Dear Ms. Veach,

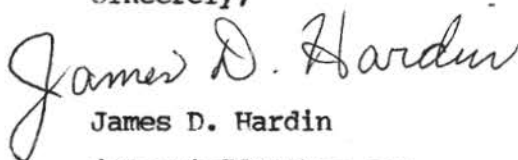
I recently read a article written by you posted on at [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov) website stating that the FCC is reining in the predatory criminal usury rates charged to inmates making prepaid debit calls or to their loved ones who accept collect telephone calls from them. Your notice states that the new capped fees would be 21¢ per minute if called prepaid or .25¢ per minute if the inmate called collect.

No where in your article did I read if the excessive "Interconnect Fee" or "Surcharge Fee" charged by Global Tel-Link etal was addressed or capped? Are you aware of this fee? Whenever any inmate places a call before the call is put through the inmate, or his loved ones if s/he's calling collect, are charged an "Interconnect Fee" or "Surcharge Fee" and it's not cents it's dollars..usually \$3 or more. That fee is a predatory criminal usury fee that needs done away with or capped. Is there anything the FCC can do about that? When do these new capped rates for Interstate calls go into effect because GTL is still charging us the same excessive predatory criminal usury rates as before?

We inmates are all very, very grateful to the FCC and its hard working staff for all the hard work and effort they put into placing these excessive rate caps on GTL etal, but the work needed is only half done. We need the "Interconnect Fees" or "Surcharge Fees" or any other euphuism GTL etal chooses to call it, plus the per minute fees capped on Intrastate calls too ASAP. Intrastate (in state) calling is where companies like GTL etal reap the most predatory criminal usury rates that make up over 90% of their income. In the enclosed newspaper article you'll read where Beaver County Jail Warden William Schouppe tells the Beaver County Commissioners that the new FCC rate caps on Interstate calls will barely even be felt by the county because over 90% of all calls made from the jail are Intrastate (in state) not Interstate (out of state) calls. Why did the FCC address the predatory criminal usury rates being charged by companies like GTL etal for Interstate calls only and not include Intrastate calls? Will the FCC cap the "Interconnect Fee" or "Surcharge Fee" plus the excessive costs per minute on Intrastate calls too and, if so, when? We're helpless without you, and our families are already suffering hardships so we really need your additional help.

Thank you very much for your valuable time, help and any consideration afforded this request for the FCC to cap fees on Intrastate telephone calls from prisons or jails nationwide. The FCC is a true Godsend to us and our families. Please keep up all the good work! God bless and best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James D. Hardin". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and email address.

James D. Hardin

jdhardin53@yahoo.com

ps: Please feel free to send copies of this letter and attachment to everyone at the FCC who's involved in this matter. Thank you!

# FCC phone rate cap won't hit jail too hard

BY J.D. PROSE

JPROSE@TIMESONLINE.COM

**HOPEWELL TWP.** — A recent decision by the Federal Communications Commission to cap some phone rates for prisoners should not affect the monthly revenue Beaver County receives from calls made by county inmates, Beaver County Jail warden William Schouppe said Thursday.

Two weeks ago, the FCC voted 2-1 to cap interstate collect calls at 25 cents per minute and prepaid or debit calls at 21 cents per minute. All calls made by inmates are collect and no calls can be made without inmates having money in a telephone account, Schouppe said.

But interstate calls, which cost 59 cents a minute with a \$3 surcharge, are not that popular here simply because most inmates are calling their families in the county or surrounding counties, Schouppe said.

He said calls made from the county jail are typically local (\$1.50 surcharge; 59 cents for first minute and 30 cents per additional minute), local long-distance (\$2 surcharge/59 cents per minute) or within the state (\$3 surcharge/59 cents per minute).

## INMATE CALLS

**Interstate collect calls at the Beaver County Jail**

**WAS:** 59 cents/minute

**WILL BE:** 25 cents/minute

**What the jail makes a month from phone calls:**  
about \$11,300

In its Aug. 9 ruling, though, the FCC board said it is also seeking comments on reforming rates for calls made within states, which could, based on the new cap on interstate calls, drastically reduce the rates charged to county inmates.

Currently, the county receives 48 percent of monthly revenue collected by DSI-ITI, a subsidiary of industry giant Global Tel•Link. Through June, the county had received nearly \$67,700 with calls generating an average of about \$11,300 each month.

Schouppe said there were 4,419 calls made from the jail in June alone.

"On a general basis, the guys get more upset if the power's down and the phones aren't working as opposed to what the rates are," he said.